

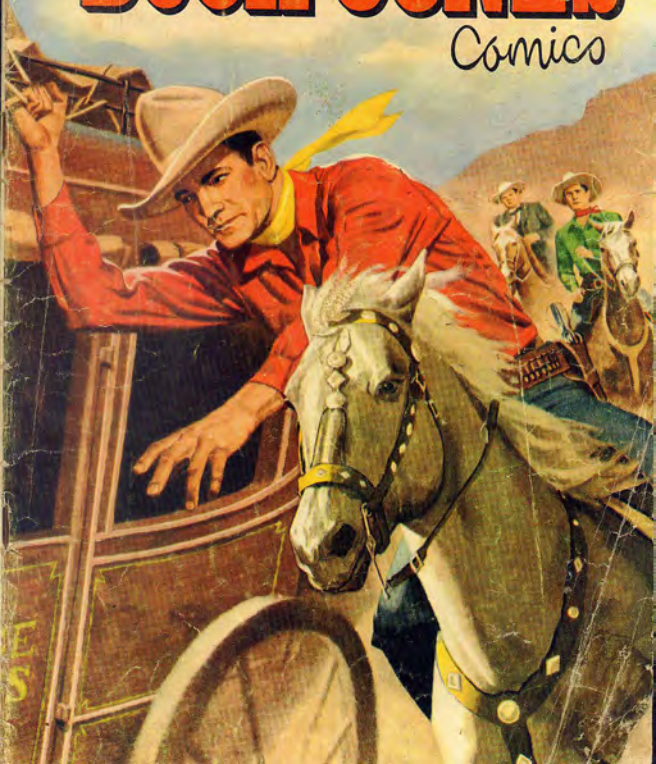
DELL
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BUCK JONES

Comics



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BUCK JONES

and the

"LAST OF THE BALD KNOBBERS"



IF I WAS YOU, LEM, I WOULDN'T SASHAY HOME ALONE! YOU'RE S'POSED TO BE MURDERED T'NIGHT!



HOGWASH, BOB! VIGILANTES WEARIN' CRAZY MABKE AN' HORNS MIGHT BE ABLE TO BLUFF OUT TH' POOR SHEEPMEN, BUT NOT TH' SHERIFF OF RED GULCH!

ALL RIGHT, SHERIFF! BUT DON'T SAY I DIDN'T CAUTION YOU!



AN' WHAT'S MORE, I EXPECT TO BE ALIVE AN' KICKIN' WHEN MY SON, JOE, COMES HOME! HE GRADUATES FROM SCHOOL OVER MISSOURI WAY N A COUPLE O' DAYS, YOU KNOW!



ADIOS, BOB... HEY--AHHHH!

BOY SHE POPS!

BANG BANG



WELL, THAT TAKES CARE O' THE PEGKY SHERIFF! NOW WE'LL ELECT ONE WHO'S FRIENDLY T' CATTLEMEN!

LET'S CELEBRATE BY BURNIN' OUT PEDRO GONZALES IN TH' MORNIN', BOB! BOY, SHE POPS!

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THE NEXT DAY FINDS BUCK JONES
ON HIS WAY TO RED GULCH...





TAKE IT EASY, OLD MAN!
YOU SWALLOWED TOO
MUCH SMOKE, BUT
YOU'LL BE OKAY
IN A JIFFY!

TH-THANKS,
SEÑOR! YOU
SAVED MY
LIFE! PEDRO
GONZALES IS
GRATEFUL!



WHO WERE
THE SLIMY
RAIDERS,
PEDRO?

QUIEN SABE? WHO
KNOWS? THEY WEAR
FUNNY MASKS WITH
HORNS. THEY HATE
SHEEPMEN. THEY KILL
SHERIFF LEM RUPERT
ONLY LAST NIGHT!

WHAT? LEM SMITH RUPERT...
DEAD? BUT I WAS HEADIN'
FOR A MEETIN' WITH HIM IN
RED GULCH TOPAY!

YOU SEEM
TO BE OKAY,
SO I'VE GOT
TO BE ON
MY WAY!



POOR RUPERT!
HE SAID THINGS
WERE BAD WHEN
HE ASKED THE FEDERAL
MARSHAL FOR A MAN
TO INVESTIGATE THIS
RANGE WAR, BUT I
WONDER IF HE KNEW
THEY WERE THIS BAD?



AFTER BUCK REVEALS HIS MISSION TO DEPUTY BOB BLOUNT IN RED GULCH...

SO YOU THINK OUR OWLHOOTS ARE REALLY BALD KNOBBERS, HUH, BUCK?

YEP! THEY ALWAYS WORE FUNNY HORNED MASKS AND THEIR WAR CRY WAS BOY, SHE POPS!



WELL, THAT FIGURES!

YOU SEE, BOB, THE BALD KNOBBERS ORIGINALLY WAS A VIGILANTE COMMITTEE ORGANIZED BY HONEST HILL FOLKS TO FIGHT LAWLESSNESS IN MISSOURI! BUT THEY GOT POWERFUL, TOOK THE LAW INTO THEIR OWN HANDS, AN WENT HOG WILD!



BUT I THOUGHT THEY WERE ALL ARRESTED!

NO, A FEW ESCAPED OVER THE STATE BORDER! MY HUNCH IS THEY'RE HERE, UP TO THEIR OLD TRICKS OF PITTING ONE FACTION AGAINST ANOTHER--FOR THEIR OWN GAIN!



I ALWAYS WONDERED WHERE THEY GOT TH' HANDLE, BALD KNOBBERS, BUCK!

WELL, THE ORIGINAL COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED MEMBERS TOOK ITS SECRET OATH ON A CERTAIN BALD KNOB HILL NEAR KIRBYVILLE, THAT WAS LONG BEFORE THEY WENT BAD!



JUST SUPPOBIN' YOUR HUNCH'S CORRECT, THEN WHAT?

FIRST, WE'VE GOT TO ELECT A TWO-FISTED SHERIFF WHO'LL COOPERATE WITH ME TO THE END! HOW ABOUT YOU?



NOT ME, BUCK, I'M TOO LAZY! BUT WHAT ABOUT JOE RUPERT, LEM'S SON? IT'S A TRADITION IN THEIR FAMILY TO BE LAW-MEN!

HMM, THAT MIGHT WORK, ESPECIALLY SINCE OLD MAN RUPERT WAS SO WELL LIKED BY LOCAL HONEST CITIZENS! WHERE IS JOE NOW?



JOE RAN AWAY FROM HOME AS A KID, AN' HE AINT BEEN HOME SINCE! BUT HIS DAD SAID JOE'S GRADUATIN' SOON FROM A SCHOOL OVER IN MISSOURI!



MEANTIME, I'LL COUNT ON YOU, BOB, TO GET JOE ELECTED WHILE I'M GONE! IF HES A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK, HE'LL GLADLY WEAR HIS OLD MAN'S BADGE AND SHOOTIN' IRONS!



HUMPH, THERE GOES PEDRO GONZALES INTO THE LAND AGENT'S OFFICE! WONDER WHAT'S UPP?



WELL, HOWDY PEDRO, UH, SORRY T' HEAR ABOUT YOUR TROUBLE THIS MORNIN'!

I'M DEFEATED SENOR SHANE/ TH' CATTLEMEN WIN! I WANT YOU TO SELL MY PROPERTY!



A SMART MOVE, PEDRO! THIS RANGE AINT BIG ENOUGH FOR CATTLE AND SHEEP! I'LL TRY T' GET YOU A FAIR PRICE... OVER AND ABOVE TH' MORTGAGE I HOLD!



PEDRO, YOU'RE PLAYIN' RIGHT INTO THE HANDS OF THE OUTLAWS! TAKE MY ADVICE - DON'T SELL!

WHAT TH' WHO IN THUNDER ARE YOU?





THE NAME'S JONES... BUCK JONES / AN' I DONT AIM TO SEE A POOR SHEEPMAN RUN OUT OF TOWN BY A BAND OF FANCY-MASKED OWLHOOTS. / COME ON, PEDRO!



I-I DON'T SAAE, SENOR JONES!
DONT WORRY, JUST SIT TIGHT! BUT GET ALL YOUR FRIENDS TO VOTE FOR JOE RUPERT... AND YOU WONT HAVE TO SELL OUT! YOU SHEEPMEN OUTNUMBER THE RANCHERS!



HEY SHANE, I JUST LEARNED THAT BUCK JONES FELLA IS A DEPUTY FEDERAL MARSHAL! HE'S GOT BOB BLOUNT 'CAMPAIGNIN' T' ELECT OLD RUPERTS SON AS 'SHERIFF!
WHAT— A DEPUTY MARSHAL?



THIS AIN'T SO GOOD, MOXEY!... HMM, AN' SO OLD LEM RUPERT HAS A SON, HUH?
YEAH, HIS NAME'S JOE! BUCK JONES IS GONNA RIDE ACROSS TH' BORDER AN' FETCH HIM BACK!



MAYBE JONES 'LL NEVER REACH MISSOURI! MAKE TRACKS FAST TO TH' HIDE-OUT! TELL BULLBAT WHATS HAPPENIN'!
AW, I WAS HIRED AS A GUN-HAWK... NOT A CARRIER PIGEON!



BUCK, TH' JUDGE SAYS WE'VE GOT A CHANCE IF WE HOLD TH' ELECTION TOMORROW... BEFORE TH' BALD KNOBBERS INTIMIDATE TH' HONEST VOTERS!
THEN ENTER JOE'S NAME AS AN ABSENT NOMINEE, BOB! LEAVE THE REST TO ME!

GATER, AS BUCK HEADS FOR MESA CITY TO MAKE STAGELINE CONNECTIONS FOR MISSOURI...

YES, SIR, SILVER-B, SOON AS WE GET A GOOD SHERIFF TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER IN RED GULCH... I'LL BE FREE TO START FERRETING OUT THE SECRET BALD KNOBBERS!



I'LL LEAVE SILVER-B AT MESA CITY... THEN PICK HIM UP ON THE WAY BACK WITH JOE RUPERT!



THAT'S BUCK JONES NOW, BULLBAT! MORE'N LIKELY HE'S ON HIS WAY T' FETCH TH' SHERIFF'S SON!

MMM...!



WE KIN GIT RID O' YOUNG RUPERT LIKE WE DONE HIS OLD MAN... BUT THIS HERE FEDERAL MARSHAL MAY CAUSE WE'UNS A PASSES O' TROUBLE!



HERE'S YORE CHANCE T' EARN YORE KEEP, MOXEY! YUH ALWAYS SAY NO MAN KIN STAND UP T' YORE GUNS! GO GIT 'IM!

WITH PLEASURE, BOSS! BOY, SHE POPS!



WONDER WHO THIS HARD-LOOKIN' HAIRPIN IS COMIN' DOWN TH' TRAIL?





HOWDY, STRANGER!
LOOKS LIKE ONE
OF US HAS GOT
TO BACK UP!

THEN BACK UP!
I WAS ON THIS
TRAIL FIRST!



IT LOOKS LIKE
THERE'S A LITTLE
ROOM FOR ARGUMENT!
SINCE YOU SEEM
TO BE ON THE
PROD, YOU MAKE
THE FIRST MOVE!

WHY, YOU
SLIMY DIAMOND-
BACK, I'LL
SHOW YOU
WHOS IN TH'
RIGHT!



EEOOWW, M' HAND!

NEVER SLAP
LEATHER AGAINST
A MAN WHO MIGHT
BE FASTER, GUNNIE!



BY JIMSON,
THAT JONES
JASPER DONE
BEAT MOXEY T'
TH' DRAW! NOW
WHAT?



I AIN'T
FINISHED
YET, LAW
DOG!



YOU WILL BE...SOON
AS I LEARN WHO
HIRED YOU TO THROW
DOWN ON ME!



UGH...
LEGGGO!

WHO ARE YOU
WORKIN' FOR?
THE BALD
KNOBBERS?





FEW DAYS LATER...

THIS IS PLUMB STRANGE!
THE RETURN ADDRESS ON
JOES LAST LETTER TO HIS
DAD READS 136 CLINTON
STREET-- WHICH TURNS
OUT TO BE A PRISON!

HEY, YOU!
WHAT'RE YOU
HANGIN' AROUND
HERE FOR?



RECKON I'VE GOT THE
WRONG ADDRESS! I CAME
HERE TO MEET A JOE
RUPERT WHO'S S'POSED
TO BE ER, GRADUATIN'
TODAY!

GRADUATIN,
HUH? IF THAT'S
A JOKE, PAL,
IT AIN'T
FUNNY!



THERE'S ONLY ONE
CON - GRADUATIN'
FROM HERE TODAY...
AN' HIS NAME IS
SMITH! YOU GOT A
BUM STEER, MISTER!
NOW BEAT IT!

OPEN THE
GATE FOR
NUMBER
35465!



IT'LL BE A COLD
DAY IN JULY
WHEN I DO!

SO-LONG,
SMITTY! HURRY
BACK! HAW, HAW!



ER, MY NAME
IS BUCK JONES.
I'M A FRIEND
OF LEM SMITH
RUPERT, THE LATE
SHERIFF OF
RED GULCH!

LATE SHERIFF!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
HAS SOMETHING
HAPPENED TO
MY DAD?

AFTER BUCK TELLS JOE THE DETAILS OF HIS FATHER'S DEATH...

I'M SORRY TO SAY YOUR DAD IS DEAD, JOEY! AND YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE, TURN OUT TO BE A JAILBIRD! WHAT A MESS!

WE TRIED TO KEEP IT A SECRET, BUCK! IT BLAMED NEAR BROKE HIS HEART! BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO DAD?

BUT WHAT IN THUNDER WERE YOU SERVIN' TIME FOR?

I WAS ARRESTED FOR BEIN' A BALD KNOBBER!

A BALD KNOBBER? OH, NO!!

THEY WASN'T A BAD OUTFIT WHEN I JOINED UP, BUCK! BUT WHEN TH' LEADERS GOT OUT O' HAND, A LOT OF US BOYS SUFFERED FOR THEIR DIRTY WORK!

NO WONDER YOUR DAD TRIED TO COVER UP FOR YOUR PAST!

WHEN I RAN AWAY FROM HOME, I TOOK DAD'S MIDDLE NAME, SMITH! THAT'S WHY MY NICKNAME IS SMITTY!

WELL, AT LEAST YOU HAVEN'T DISGRACED THE NAME OF RUPERT!

RECKON I AIN'T BEEN MUCH CREDIT TO HIM, BUT I'M GONNA START OUT LIFE AGAIN WITH A CLEAN SLATE!

YOU'RE GOIN' TO START OUT WITH A CLEAN SWEEP! BELIEVE IT OR NOT, JOE RUPERT, YOU ARE ABOUT TO BE THE NEW SHERIFF OF RED GULCH!

WH-WHAT?

BUCK TELLS JOE RUPERT OF THE TWIST OF FATE THAT MAKES AN EX-CONVICT A SHERIFF-TO-BE AND THEY TAKE THE MESA CITY STAGE BACK HOME...



I AIN'T BEEN IN RED GULCH SINCE I WAS A LITTLE SQUIRT! I FEEL KINDA SQUEAMISH, BUCK!

IF YOU'VE BEEN ELECTED SHERIFF AND TH' CITIZENS LEARN WHERE YOU SPENT THE PAST FOUR YEARS, YOU'LL FEEL WORSE!



PARDON ME, I COULDN'T HELP BUT HEAR! YOU KNOW, I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A LAW OFFICER, TOO—EVER SINCE CHILDHOOD! YOU MUST BE VERY EXCITED, SIR!



WHO SAYS - I'M EXCITED...?

LET ME INTRODUCE US... I'M BUCK JONES AND MY FRIEND IS JOE RUPERT. HOWDY!

I'M KNOWN AS JO-JO BROOKS, GENTLEMEN! I'M A CIRCUS CLOWN BY TRADE...



YOU SEE, MY FATHER WAS A CLOWN—AND HIS FATHER BEFORE HIM! BUT FRANKLY, I'D HAVE PREFERRED PURSUING A CAREER OF CRIME BUSTING, BELIEVE YOU ME!



MEANWHILE, UP AHEAD...

THERE COMES THE STAGE YONDER, RIGHT ON SCHEDULE!

HAW! HAW! JOE RUPERT DONE WON TH' ELECTION, BOYS... BUT HE AIN'T GONNA LIVE T' SERVE AS SHERIFF!



WHAT TH' BALD
KNOBBERS / WHOA,
WHOA, YUH JUGHEADS!



CLIMB OUT, JONES! WE'VE GOT A
WELCOMIN' COMMITTEE FER TH' NEW
SHERIFF O' RED GULCH, HAW, HAW!

SO JOE RUPERT
WON THE
ELECTION, EH?



HOLY SMOKE,
LOOK, BOSS! IT'S
SMITTY, ONE OF
TH' OLD GANG!

BY JIMSON,
IT SHORE IS!
WHAT'RE YUH DOIN'
ON TH' STAGE,
SMITTY?



I JUST GOT
OUT O' PRISON,
BOYS! BUT I
CAN'T SAY I
RECOGNIZE
YOU IN THOSE
MASKS!

NEVER MIND,
SMITTY, WE'LL TAKE
EM OFF SOON AS
WE STRING UP JOE
RUPERT AN' HIS
SIDEKICK, BUCK
JONES!



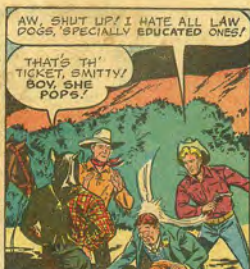
WELL DOGGONE, TO
THINK I WAS RIDIN' WITH
TH' NEW SHERIFF O' RED
GULCH! DON'T TELL ME
ANYBODY'S AFRAID O'
HIM ... HAW, HAW!

HUH...
ME?



HMM, JOE RUPERT'S
PULLIN' A MIGHTY
FAST MOVE! I'LL
PLAY ALONG TO STALL
FOR TIME!

GENTS, YOU'RE
MAKIN' A GEAVE
MISTAKE IF
YOU HARM
THIS LITTLE
MAN BEFORE
HE'S SWORN IN!



BOY, WE SURE
FOOLED TH' BALD
KNOBBERS, EH,
BUCK?

YOU SURE DID
SOME FAST THINKING,
JOE! NOW HERE'S MY
SCHEME, I'LL DUMP
YOU OFF! TELL YOUR
EX-PALS THAT
YOU ESCAPED
FROM ME!

YOU SEE, I'VE GOT A GOOD IDEA
WHO THE THREE RINGLEADERS ARE...
BUT I WANT TO ROUND UP TH' WHOLE
GANG! THAT'S WHERE YOU COME IN!

I GET IT! I
LEARN WHERE THEIR
HEADQUARTERS ARE...
THEN REPORT
BACK TO YOU!

EXACTLY! MEANTIME,
I'LL PERSUADE JO-JO
BROOKS TO POSE AS
THE NEWLY ELECTED
SHERIFF!

POOR JO-JO!
I HOPE I DIDN'T
HURT HIS NOGGIN,
BUT I HAD T'
DO IT TO KEEP
HIM FROM QUEERIN'
OUR GAME!

SO LONG—AND
GOOD LUCK, JOE!

SEE Y'
LATER,
BUCK!

OH-H-H,
MY HEAD!
WHERE AM I?

WH-WHAT
HAPPENED,
MISTER JONES?

THE GREATEST
THING IN YOUR
LIFE, JO-JO! YOU ALWAYS
WANTED TO BE A LAW
OFFICER... HERE'S
YOUR CHANCE!

HEY, IT'S
SMITTY!

I SLUGGED JONES
AN' JUMPED OUT! GEE,
IT'S GREAT T' SEE YOU
ALL AGAIN! HI, BULLBAT...
SHANE!

LATER, BUCK JONES AND JO-JO BROOKS
NEAR RED GULCH, HAVING LEFT THE
STAGE AT MESA CITY JUNCTION...

SO NOW THAT YOU
SAVVY WHAT THE REAL
JOE RUPERT AND I ARE
TRYIN' TO DO, JO-JO, HOW
DO YOU FEEL ABOUT
IMPERSONATIN' A SHERIFF?



BUCK, I CONSIDER IT
A GREAT HONOR AND
PRIVILEGE! COUNT ON ME
TO RISK LIFE AND LIMB,
IF NECESSARY, TO AID YOU
IN ROUNDING UP ALL THE
BALD KNOBBERS!

DEPUTY BOB BLOUNT,
MEET YOUR NEW
BOSS, SHERIFF
JOE RUPERT!

WHAT? IS THAT
TH' HOMBRE I
CAMPAIGNED
FOR? HOLY
MACKERAL!

THAT'S A SHERIFF?
POOR OLD LEM
RUPERT MUST BE
TURNING OVER IN
HIS GRAVE!

CARAMBA! IT IS
FOR HEEM I GET
ALL MY AMIGOS
TO VOTE?



MEANWHILE...

SHANE, YOU
AN' SMITTY WAIT,
FER MOXEY AN'
ME IN YORE OFFICE!
WEVE GOT
BUSINESS!

REMEMBER WHAT I
SAID BULLBAT! TH'
NEW SHERIFF IS
HARMLESS—SO WHY
PICK ON HIM?



MAYBE YUH'RE RIGHT,
SMITTY, BUT THROUGH
HIM, WE KIN BAIT
JONES INTO MAKIN'
HIS MOVE. C'MON,
MOXEY!

AYE, BOY,
SHE POPS!



PRESENTLY...

SHERIFF, HOW D'YA
AIM T' PROTECT US
SHEEPMEN AGAINST
TH' OWLHOOTS TH'
CATTLEMEN HAVE
IMPORTED?

ER, THAT'S A
GOOD QUESTION.
AH, YES! UHH...!



YUH NEEDN'T ANSWER
IT, SHERIFF! WE'RE
MORE INTERESTED
IN SEEN' YUH DO
A BIG CITY DANCE
FOR US, HAW, HAW!

YEAH, I'M
DANCE FER
TH' CROWD.
MOXEY!
YIPPEE!



I CAN'T SAVVY IT,
BUCK! HOW COULD
OLD MAN RUPERT
HAVE SUCH A LOCO
TENDERFOOT FOR A SON?

IT'S A LONG
STORY, BOB.
BUT -- HEY,
WHAT'S THAT?



WHAT TH'?

HMM, I EXPECTED SOME-
THIN' LIKE THIS! WHAT A
TIME FOR THE SHERIFF
TO PLAY TO THE
GRANDSTAND!



HOW'M I
DOING,
FOLKS?



HOORAY FOR TH'
SHERIFF! HE'S
A REGULAR
ACROBAT!

ATTA BOY,
SHERIFF! YOU
AIN'T AFRAID
OF ANY TWO-
BIT GUNMAN!

THINK YOU'RE FUNNY,
EH? OKAY, SMART
ALECK, TELL TH'
FOLKS WHY YUH
CARRY FOUR GUNS!
BET YUH CAN'T EVEN
HANDLE ONE!





PUT AWAY TH' CARDS, BOYS!
TH' TIME HAS COME T' SHEAR
TH' MULEY SHEEPMEN OF
THEIR HOLDIN'S.. ONCE
AN' FER ALL!



IT'S ABOUT TIME! PEDRO
GONZALES -- FOR ONE -- STILL
REFUSES T' SELL HIS LAND
BECAUSE BUCK JONES TOLD
HIM NOT TO! AN' THERE'S OTHER
MUTTON-HERDERS HOLDIN'
OUT, TOO!



SAY, I FIGURED YOU
BALD KNOBBERS WAS
IN SOMETHIN' BIGGER
THAN A LITTLE OLD
RANGE WAR BETWEEN
SHEEPMEN AN'
CATTLEMEN!

AYE, SMITTY, IT'S
BIGGER, MARK ME!
WE HAVE A
SYNDICATE, WITH
SHANE HERE
ACTIN' AS LAND
AGENT!



FIRST, WE TERRORIZE TH' SHEEPMEN
INTO SELLIN' THEIR LAND! SOON
WE'LL OWN MORE GRAZIN' LAND
THAN WE KIN STOCK -- THEN WE
START RUSTLIN' COWS!

HMM, PRETTY SLUCK!
MEANTIME TH' BALD
KNOBBERS HAS TH'
BLESSIN'S OF HONEST
CATTLEMEN WHO
HATE SHEEP!



OKAY, MEN, SEND OUT WORD T'
ALL BALD KNOBBERS T' MEET
AT TH' SECRET HIDE-OUT THIS
AFTERNOON! WE'RE HOLDIN' COURT!

AN' A NECKTIE
PARTY, HAW, HAW!



JOE, YOU HELP MOXEY
BRING IN GONZALES
AN' TH' TWO SHEEPMEN
FROM BARLOW BASIN!
WE'LL MAKE EXAMPLES
O' THEM!

BOY,
SHE
POPS!



LATER...

YOU SHEEPMEN WERE BRUNG HERE
T' STAND TRIAL AFORE THIS SOLEMN LAW-
ABIDIN' COMMITTEE O' CATTLEMEN! TWICE
YE'VE BEEN WARNED OUT, BUT YE STUBBORNLY
REFUSE T' GIT OFFN TH' RICH GRAZIN' LAND
THAT HONEST RANCHERS NEED FER THEIR
COW CRITTERS! I NOW APPOINT A RANCHER,
BROTHER X, T' DEFEND YUH FAIR N' SQUARE!

MEANWHILE, IN
RED GULCH...

BUCK! I SAW TWO
MASKED HOMBRES
HERDIN' GONZALES
AN' TWO OTHER
SHEEP PUNCHERS
TOWARD RIMROCK
BLUFF!

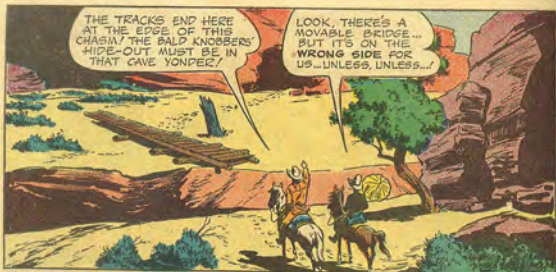
GOOD! THIS
MUST BE THE
BREAK WERE WAITIN'
FOR! BOB, STAY
HERE AND HOLD
DOWN THE FORT!

SOON...

WHOM DO YOU
SUSPECT
ARE THE
RINGLEADERS,
BUCK?

NO AMOUNT OF
DISGUISE HELPS
BULLBAT DEERING,
T.V. GHANE AND
THEIR GUN-SLUCK,
MOXEY!





THE TRACKS END HERE AT THE EDGE OF THIS CHASIM! THE BALD KNOBBERS' HIDE-OUT MUST BE IN THAT CAVE YONDER!

LOOK, THERE'S A MOVABLE BRIDGE... BUT IT'S ON THE WRONG SIDE FOR US... UNLESS, UNLESS...!



CAN YOU LASSO THAT STUMP OVER THERE, BUCK?

RECKON SO! BUT THEN WHAT?



EUREKA, YOU DID IT!



IF YOU'RE GONNA TRY TO DO WHAT I'M THINKIN'... WELL, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

MAKE IT TAUT AS POSSIBLE!



GOSH, I'VE SEEN SOME HIGH-WIRE WORK IN MY DAY, BUT NEVER ACROSS A CHASIM ON A COWBOYS LARIAT! CAREFUL, JO-JO!

POHAW, I DIDN'T SPEND ALL MY LIFE IN A CIRCUS FOR NOTHING!



SUFFERIN' CATS, WATCH OUT JO-JO!







OKAY, MEN, SWING PEDRO UP FIRST!
BOY, SHE POPS!

BOY,
SHE POPS!

ALL RIGHT, HOLD IT,
OR MY GUN'LL POP!



THUNDERATION!
IT'S BUCK JONES
AN' SMITTY!

CORRECTION — IT'S
DEPUTY MARSHAL
JONES AND JOE
RUPERT, SHERIFF
OF RED GULCH... AND
YOU'RE ALL UNDER
ARREST! PEDRO, GET
THEIR GUNS!



YEOOW, MY
SHOULDER!

THAT WAS SHANE
AN' MOXEY WE
GOT, BUCK!

OWWW!



THERE'S BULLBAT...
BREAKIN' FOR TH'
SMALL PASSAGE! IT
LEADS OUTDOORS, BUCK!

I'LL GET HIM!
YOU HELP PEDRO
DISARM THE
OTHERS!



I CAN'T SEE WITH THIS
BLAMED MASK! I'VE GOT
T' GIT TO TH' BRIDGE!





ONE YARD FROM THE SHACK ...

FROM NOW ON, ME ...
TRIG NELSON... IS GONNA
BE BUCK JONES... AN' YOU'LL
BE NOTHIN' BUT A
DROWNED COWPOKE!



60 LONS, SUCKER!...
HEY, WATCH OUT,
YOU JUGHEADED BRONC!

WHEEE!

COME BACK HERE, BLAGT
YUH!... OH, WELL, NO USE
CHASIN' HIM... MY CAVUSE
LOOKS LIKE JONES' HOSS
ANYWAY... AN' I'M IN A
HURRY T' GET T' TH'
BAR-M!



BUT THE ICY WATERS OF THE RIVER
REVIVE BUCK AND HE MIRACULOUSLY AVOIDS
THE JAGGED ROCKS...

(GASP) WH-WHAT
HAPPENED? OH, NOW
I REMEMBER! (GASP)
STRANGER JUMPED
ME IN SAGE'S SHACK
... HE MUST'VE
DUMPED ME IN
THE RIVER!



GOOD BOY,
SILVER-B!
YOU GOT
AWAY,
TOO...!



WHEW! WE'LL REST
AWHILE, THEN TAKE TO
THE BUSHWHACKER'S
TRAIL! I'M AFRAID HE'S
DONE SOMETHING TO
POOR OLD SAGE!



MEANWHILE, TRIG NELSON NEARS THE BAR-M RANCH...

NOW TO FIND RICKY CORBIN AN' TELL HIM I'VE TAKEN CARE OF JONES...LIKE WE PLANNED!

BAR-M RANCH

HI, TRIG! DID YOU FIX JONES BEFORE HE CONTACTED SAGEBRUSH HOTCHKISS?

IT WORKED EVEN BETTER N WE HOPED, CORBIN! JONES DROWNED!

GOOD! YOU SEE, TRIG, WHEN SAGEBRUSH ADVISED MY CALICO-BOSS T' HIRE BUCK JONES AS GUARD FOR HER NEW CATTLE SHIPMENT, I WAS LISTENIN'!

HMM, SO THAT'S HOW YUH KNOWNED JONES WOULD BE AT THE SHACK!

BUT WHAT IF SAGE SHOWS UP HERE AN' QUEERS OUR GAME?

WE'RE LEAVIN' SOON AS YOU MEET TH' BOSS, BESSIE MANNING! TH' CATTLE TRAIN SHOULD BE ALL LOADED BY NOW!

UH, MISS MANNING, THIS HOMBRE IS BUCK JONES TO SEE YOU!

I'M GLAD TO KNOW YOU, BUCK! BUT WHERE'S SAGEBRUSH? IT WAS HIS IDEA I HIRE YOU SINCE MY FOREMAN AN' CREW WERE HAVING SO MUCH TROUBLE WITH OUTLAWS RAIDING MY STOCK SHIPMENTS!

I...I'LL DO MY BEST, MA'AM! AS FOR SAGEBRUSH, HE...

OH, THERE'S SAGEBRUSH NOW... DOWN AT THE CORRALS. HE'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING, BUCK... AND GOOD LUCK!



DAD-BLAME IT, HOSS! THEM STRAYS I CHAGED MADE ME MISS BUCK AT MY SHACK! BUT MEBBIE HE MOSEYED OVER HERE T' BESSIE'S SPREAD... A-LOOKIN' FER ME!



WE'RE SUNK, CORBIN! SAGEBRUSH'LL TIP OUR HAND!

SHUT UP! I'LL HANDLE THIS!



SAGEBRUSH, SHAKE HANDS WITH THIS HOMBRE SO TH' BOSS CAN SEE YOU FROM HER PORCH! GO ON, SHAKE, OR YOU'RE A DEAD MAN!

HUH! WHO'S TH' WADDIE'S WHAT'S TH' BIG IDEA?



THIS HOMBRE'S S'POSED T' BE BUCK JONES... AN' YOU'RE COMIN' WITH US BEFORE TH' BOSS LEARNS DIFFERENT!

WHY I AIN'T NEVER SEEN THIS WADDIE AFORE! HEY, OUCH, M'HAND!



GO ON, WAVE T' BESSIE, BLAST YOUR HIDE! SHE AIN'T ABOUT TO GET WISE TO NELSON NOW!

WHAT HAPPENED T' BUCK? WHAT'S YOUR DIRTY GAME, CORBIN?



THE GAME'S MY GANG IS GONNA HOLD UP TH' CATTLE TRAIN AGAIN, RUSTLE TH' BAR-M STEERS... AN' BUCK JONES WILL GET TH' BLAME!

WHAT?!

LATER...

HMM, THE BUSHWHACKER'S TRACKS LEAD STRAIGHT TO THE BAR-M, SILVER-B! BUT THEY'RE KINDA BLOTTED OUT HERE!



HOWDY, STRANGER! CLIMB DOWN AND HAVE A COOL DRINK. I'M BESSIE MANNING!

THANKS, MISS! MY NAME'S BUCK JONES!



BUCK JONES! WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE KIDDING? BUCK, SAGEBRUSH HOTCHISS AND MY FOREMAN LEFT FOR THE RAILROAD SIDING NEAR DRY STREAM THIRTY MINUTES AGO!

THEN THE OTHER JONES IS A PHONY, MA'AM! HERE'S MY CREDENTIALS AND SAGE'S LETTER IN MY SADDLE BAG!



SAGE DOESN'T SAY TOO MUCH, AS YOU CAN SEE! JUST WANTS ME TO HELP OUT A FRIEND!

THEN YOU ARE BUCK JONES! WELL, I'M THE FRIEND HE MENTIONS! I NEEDED A GOOD CATTLE GUARD AND..!



OH, WHAT AM I GOIN' TO DO? I'LL LOSE MY STEERS...! BY NOW, THE LOCOMOTIVE'S PICKED UP THE CARS AND THEY'RE HEADED FOR TETON!

IT ALSO MEANS SAGE IS IN TROUBLE, AS WELL AS YOUR CRITTERS! OBVIOUSLY, YOUR FOREMAN'S IN CAHOOTS WITH THE HOMBRE IMPERSON- ATIN' ME!



SO CORBIN IS A CROOK! I'VE HAD A FUNNY FEELIN' ABOUT HIM AND NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, SAGE DID ACT RATHER STRANGE WHEN HE LEFT WITH THOSE TWO POLECATS!

TELL ME, MISS BESSIE, WHERE CAN I INTERCEPT THAT CATTLE TRAIN?







AS BUCK REACHES THE CABOOSE AND CLIMBS DOWN THE FRONT LADDER, CORBIN STARTS FOR THE FRONT OF THE TRAIN VIA THE CABOOSE'S REAR LADDER...



MEANWHILE ON THE CABOOSE...

HEY, BUCK! HERE COMES CORBIN'S COW THIEVES FROM TH' DIRECTION O' DEVIL'S JUNCTION!

DON'T WORRY, SAGE! I'VE A HUNCH THE ENGINEER STOPPED THE TRAIN ON THE BRIDGE SO THEY CAN'T UNLOAD THE STEERS! LET'S GO UP TO THE CROW'S NEST!



HI, CORBIN! WHAT HAPPENED? WE CAN'T UNLOAD THEM CRITTERS HERE ON TH' BRIDGE!

AW, WE'RE STALLED FOR A FEW MINUTES! GO SEE IF TRIG NELSON'S IN TH' CABOOSE!

OKAY, CHIEF!



OH-OH, CORBIN'S GUNNIES IS HEADED THIS WAY, BUCK! NOW WHAT?

LOAN ME SOME OF YOUR DRY CARTRIDGES... JUST IN CASE! I'M AFRAID WERE IN FOR A REAL SHOOT-OUT!



FER TH' LUVVA MIKE! TEX AN' KIRK IS TIED-UP!

WATCH OUT! BUCK JONES AN' SAGEBRUSH ARE UP IN TH' LOOKOUT-BOX!



THERE THEY ARE! LET 'EM HAVE IT!





OWWW, MY SHOULDER!

BANG!
BANG!

WE'RE LIKE DUCKS ON ROCKS HERE!... YEOWWWW!

YAAAAAH!



SING ON TH' POPS AN' GIVE HIM A DOSE OF STEAM!

RIGHT!
ALL ABOARD!

HEY! WHAT'S TH' SHOOTIN' ABOUT BACK TH'... YOWWWW!

SS-SS-SSSS!



SOMETHIN' WENT WRONG ... GOT T' GET OUT OF HERE PRONTO!

WANT TO RACE TO DEVIL'S JUNCTION, CORBIN? HAW, HAW!



HEY, WHA...?!

END OF THE LINE FOR YOU, CORBIN! WE WANT YOU ALIVE SO YOU CAN TELL THE SHERIFF ABOUT ALL YOUR COW-TRAIN RAIDS!



LATER ...

... AND SO YOUR FOREMAN CONFESSED EVERYTHING TO THE TETON SHERIFF, MISS BESSIE!

BY GOLLY, I TOLD YUH MY PAL'D GET VORE STEERS THROUGH SAFE, BESSIE!

YOU SURE DID, SAGE! THANKS LOADS, BUCK!